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CROATIA

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Assistance to NGOs (CroNGO)



Over 4,000 students and approximately 100 youth from Pula were involved in organizing youth city council elections in March 2004. Local citizens were very positive about this project, emphasizing that ZUM, a local youth NGO presents a new healthy voice in the city.

Academy for Educational Development

Project completed September 2007

Croatian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played an important role in building democracy and strengthening citizen's participation. The sector is addressing citizens' needs, providing services, influencing decision-making, and mobilizing citizens. Civil society continues to grow with more than 33,500 registered associations. NGOs working in the areas of human rights, gender issues, political process, environmental protection and social services are among the most active. However, Croatian civil society organizations continue to grapple with problems of financial and organizational sustainability. To address these issues, USAID refocused and extended its CroNGO program for additional three years to work in the following areas:

Community Partnership Program (CPP) provided small financial and technical support to local NGOs that deal with economic development, tourism promotion, and civic community spaces. This component was implemented in partnership with three regional partners: Association MI, OGI and SMART.

Sector Development Program was an integrated grant, training and technical assistance program that addressed key weakness in the sector, including advocacy, capacity building, and financial viability, and volunteerism and NGO visibility.

Institutional Support Program supported several key institutions that serve as resources and sources of support for Croatian NGOs, including the National Foundation for Civil Society Development; Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs; and Trainer's Forum.

NGO Legal Reform Program assisted Croatian partners to strengthen the NGO legal and fiscal framework and capacity to implement new legislation. In coordination with the Government, National Foundation for Civil Society and some NGOs, CroNGO assisted with drafting and enacting the Law on Volunteerism; Code of Good Practices in Public Funding to NGOs, and other related regulations.

Results

CSO Legal framework improved by adopting the Law on Associations, the Law on the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, Freedom of Information Act, Law on Volunteerism, Code on Public Financing of NGOs, and the tax law reforms benefiting NGOs.

Five leading advocacy NGOs have successfully influenced policy changes related to elections, democracy development, minority rights and economic development. Strengthened NGO grant-making and support services capacity in three major regions of the country, including Association MI, SMART, OGI, and Volunteer Center Osijek.

Implementer: Academy for Educational Development (AED)

Partners: European Center for Not-For-Profit Law (ECNL), Non-profit Enterprise and Self-Sustainability Team (NESsT), Association MI (Split), OGI (Osijek), SMART (Rijeka)

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Over 70,000 citizens were mobilized to improve conditions in their communities, and close to 300 NGOs have developed partnerships with citizens, local government, businesses and other stakeholders.

Approximately 750 organizations increased their institutional capacity through tailored and standard training and TA programs, implementation of SOKNO quality assurance standards, and good governance principles.

The program promoted corporate and individual philanthropy and NGO/business partnership as a desirable practice for local businesses results in twenty long-term partnerships, establishment of Donacije.info web site and their corporate philanthropy award, and development of methodology for measuring corporate social responsibility practices in Croatia.

The NGO sector has been introduced to successful and replicable models of income generation and fundraising, through small grants program, training and technical assistance and publishing.

Croatian NGOs benefit from positive public perception of their work, with over 70% of the population believing that NGO work is extremely or somehow useful for society.